

paragraph of the Code of Nomenclature of the A. O. U. should be read to the 'shortcomers' so often that to obtain relief they would remedy their omissions.

Canon II of the Code should be amended by striking out the last clause and inserting "and a species shall not be considered named until provided with both a scientific and a vernacular name." This would give us instant relief, as rather than see their names replaced by some others as describer, the real describers would do their duty to save their rightful honors. If it were not for the above clause we could get even with the describers by furnishing the vernacular name ourselves and tacking our name to the vernacular name, and so steal half of the coveted honor.

Yours respectfully,

F. STEPHENS.

*Witch Creek, Cal.,*

Feb. 1895.

#### Cold Storage as an Aid to the Bird Collector.

TO THE EDITORS OF 'THE AUK':—

*Dear Sirs.*—It is possible that some of the readers of 'The Auk' may sometime find themselves in the very unsatisfactory position that I found myself last September, when I returned from a successful day's collecting trip only to confront an emergency requiring prompt attention, which of course meant the loss of the birds.

Hastily saving two or three of the more important ones, the remainder were packed, just as they were brought in from the field, in a box and placed in the freezing room of a local cold storage concern. A week later I visited the place with the intention of taking them out, but upon examination I found them in perfect condition, and there and then decided to make an experiment, and accordingly left the lot for an indefinite period. Every ornithologist and collector appreciates the fact that sometimes an opportunity occurs to secure a fine series of some bird,—an opportunity that may not occur again for many years,—and it is irretrievably lost because pressure of business stands like a wall between him and the time necessary for the proper preservation of the skins. Being confronted with this situation last fall, and after the favorable start made by the first dozen of birds put in, I determined to solve, if possible, the problem; so during the latter part of September and the first part of October I secured a nice series of the birds sought, together with a scattering lot of Sparrows, Woodpeckers, Canada Jays, etc., birds ranging in size from a Brown Creeper to a Flicker, some 98 in all. Carefully replacing the cotton in their throats, each bird was slipped into a cone

of heavy paper: half a dozen of these cones formed a large package. These, from day to day as fast as accumulated, were placed in a covered wooden box reserved for the purpose in the freezer. About three months later, on the second of January, 1895, the birds were taken out and found to be in excellent condition. The weather outside was about zero, and it kept them frozen, else only a few at a time could have been taken out; and to get them in shape for skinning it was only necessary to place the number one desired to prepare in any warm room, and they soon relaxed without sweating or even dampening a feather. In talking with the foreman of the freezing plant last fall he thought they might 'sweat' enough to wet and spoil the feathers, but the result proved the reverse, for the long freeze had a drying effect, especially at the throat, where the cotton had absorbed all moisture and the skin in some of the smaller specimens was almost rigid. The legs also of some of the smaller ones were beginning to dry, but the toes were not too stiff to place in position. It was necessary to be careful in skinning about shot holes, for wherever the natural moisture had been drained away the skin had a tendency to dry down upon the flesh below; but after preparing the first specimen all these difficulties were discovered and easily overcome in the others.

It occurred to me that many of the members of the A. O. U. and others in the larger eastern cities where cold storage freezers are in operation, might often save specimens which from pressure of business are often left to spoil, in spite of 'good intentions' when they are shot. With good collecting grounds on the coast a few hours' ride away, unexpected wind-falls of good species might be properly packed, so that tail and wing feathers are not crumpled, and shipped by express direct to the freezer; then, the following winter, when time hangs leisurely, they can be taken out and prepared with much better results, for each skin can be given all the attention it requires.

FRANK S. DAGGETT.

*Duluth, Minn.*

#### Apparatus for Preparing Birds' Eggs.

TO THE EDITORS OF 'THE AUK':—

*Dear Sirs,*—Never having seen any description of the apparatus used by me during the past season for preparing eggs for the cabinet, I am persuaded that a brief article concerning it will not be without interest to oologists. The accompanying cut will explain its mode of operation.